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ABSTRACT

This guide lists four model content standards for civics education in Colorado elementary schools. Standards cited in the guide are: (1) students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the U.S. republican form of government; (2) students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy; (3) students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs; and (4) students understand how citizens exercise the rules, rights, and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels local, state, and national. For each of the four standards, the guide outlines educational objectives for students in kindergarten through grade eight. (BT)

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COLORADO MODEL CONTENT STANDARDS FOR CIVICS, GRADES K-8

Suggested Grade Level Expectations*

(Suggestions for improvement are always welcome)

SO 033 853

Revised: 6/25/01

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CIVICS—KINDERGARTEN

The purpose of the suggested grade-level expectations is to show content and skills expected of students grades K-8 to enable them to meet the Colorado model content standards for civics.

Standard 1:

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Kindergarten students will:

1.1 Define "constitution", "government" and "democracy"; recognize that family members make and enforce rules and settle disputes
1.2 Give an example of people using power and authority like school crossing guards and teachers
1.3 Tell about the U.S. Constitution and the first ten amendments (Bill of Rights)
1.4 Identify great leaders and symbols of political culture—George Washington, Betsy Ross, Thomas Jefferson, American flag, Statue of Liberty, Mt. Rushmore and the White House
1.5 Make and post a constitution of class rules, rights and responsibilities

Standard 2:

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Kindergarten students will:

2.1 Identify school rules about what kindergarteners can and cannot do, e.g.: using the crosswalk, safety rules, voting on decisions
2.2 Name people who have authority to enforce rules in the school, e.g.: teachers, administrators, secretaries, custodians, etc.
2.3 Identify people and groups of people who apply rules, e.g.: police, judges, legislators, Governor, current U.S. President
2.4 Tell how students monitor and influence school rules by getting informed and discussing the issues

Standard 3:

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

Kindergarten students will:

3.1 Locate the U.S., Canada and Mexico (neighbors) on a globe and map
3.2 Locate on a globe or map the nation from which their family originally came
3.3 Define "international" and give an example of a group or organization that works in many countries, e.g.: International Red Cross

Standard 4:

Students understand how citizens exercise the rules, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all leve's – local, state, and national.

Kindergarten students will:

4.1 Define "citizen" and explain how students are citizens in a school, community, state and country
4.2 Identify a family decision needing to be made (where to go on a vacation), in which all family members discuss the options and arrive at a decision
4.3 Tell what "freedom of speech" and "freedom of religion" mean
4.4 Identify important characteristics of a good citizen in the school (obeys rules, helps others)

CIVICS—FIRST GRADE

Standard 1:

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

First grade students will:

1.1 Define "citizen," "constitution," and "government"; discuss matters of importance to all classroom citizens, i.e.: bus safety, crosswalk rules, and lunchroom procedures
1.2 Display pictures of community helpers like fire fighters, mail carriers and librarians
1.3 Explain the Bill of Rights protected in the U.S. Constitution
1.4 Identify symbols of American political culture, i.e.: American flag, Liberty Bell, eagle, etc.
1.5 Make and post a Grade 1 constitution of rules, rights, and responsibilities

Standard 2:

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

First grade students will:

2.1 Explain the purpose of the school's Student Handbook
2.2 Explain the steps in settling a dispute or resolving a problem in the classroom
2.3 Explain the reasons for having classroom and school rules (safety, fairness, order)
2.4 Identify how students can influence school rules by studying issues, discussing, and taking concerns to people in authority

Standard 3:

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

First grade students will:

3.1 Locate the U.S. and hemispheres (northern, southern, western, eastern) on the world globe and map
3.2 Locate the nation of origin of three folk tales used in class

Standard 4:

Students understand how citizens exercise the rules, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels – local, state, and national.

First grade students will:

4.1 Identify the criteria for citizenship in the United States
4.2 Explain the responsibilities of a good school citizen, e.g.: protecting property, showing courtesy to all, obeying rules, and getting informed
4.3 Bring an artifact or symbol of the right to own property, e.g.: backpack, lunchbox, dog tag, photo of automobile
4.4 Identify three purposes of the school's recycling center

CIVICS—SECOND GRADE

Standard 1:

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Second grade students will:

1.1 Discuss ways in which teachers and principals enforce rules and settle disputes
1.2 Define "limited" and "unlimited" government and give an example of people using power and authority, such as police officers
1.3 Identify the function of the Colorado Constitution
1.4 Explain the importance of respect for laws in the school and community, i.e.: playground safety, speed limits, voting
1.5 Make and post a constitution for Grade 2 rules, rights, and responsibilities; discuss ways the constitution protects all class members

Standard 2:

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Second grade students will:

2.1 Identify some state and national laws about property rights and voting rights
2.2 Explain a limit of authority in a school, e.g.: the right to a hearing before punishment
2.3 Explain what makes a good law and rule, e.g.: reasonable, fair, promotes the common good
2.4 Identify criteria for laws and rules, e.g.: enforceable, effective

Standard 3:

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

Second grade students will:

3.1 Label flags and currency from Mexico and Canada (U.S. neighbors)
3.2 Bring and explain an item from home which came from a foreign country

Standard 4:

Students understand how citizens exercise the rules, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels – local, state, and national.

Second grade students will:

4.1 Recite the Pledge of Allegiance to symbolize citizenship in the U.S.
4.2 Explain the reasons for flag ceremonies and national holidays (Fourth of July, Memorial Day, Martin Luther King Day, etc.)
4.3 Discuss how a student can exercise his/her rights in a school controversy, e.g.: gathering information, discussing both sides (pro and con), voting on a topic like "eliminating school recess"
4.4 Define "leadership" and give characteristics of a good leader

CIVIC—THIRD GRADE

Standard 1:

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Third grade students will:

1.1 Describe what school and the community might be like without a constitution and government
1.2 Define "limited" and "unlimited" government and explain why the power of a government should be limited
1.3 Write the names of three rights protected by the Colorado Constitution
1.4 Identify American leaders in American political culture, e.g.: Pocahontas, Chief Ouray, John Smith, Anne Hutchinson, and Sojourner Truth
1.5 Compare the similarities and differences between the U.S. Constitution and Grade 3 rights and responsibilities

Standard 2:

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Third grade students will:

2.1 Define "tax" and give examples of state and national taxes
2.2 Identify different kinds of decisions (individual and group) made in a school, e.g.: policy regarding soda pop being sold; choices for lunch; taking a field trip or picnic?
2.3 Explain three types of law—juvenile, criminal, and civil
2.4 Describe how the criteria for a good law are developed, i.e.: discussing, debating and voting on what is fair, reasonable and enforceable

Standard 3:

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

Third grade students will:

3.1 Explain a current event involving the U.S. and another country in the Western Hemisphere
3.2 Explain what a U.S. citizen should possess when traveling in another country, e.g.: passport, visa, currency, immunization, and embassy information
3.3 Learn about the United Nations, and explain what UNICEF does around the world

Standard 4:

Students understand how citizens exercise the rules, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels – local, state, and national.

Third grade students will:

4.1 Describe how a school T-shirt is a symbol of school citizenship
4.2 Sing and explain the meaning of the National Anthem
4.3 Explain how the school's canned food drive for the needy expresses responsibilities of good citizens
4.4 Define and give an example of a "good public servant"

CIVICS—FOURTH GRADE

Standard 1:

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Fourth grade students will:

1.1 Define "democracy" and "republican government" and explain the purpose of the Colorado Constitution
1.2 Explain three limits on government, e.g.: search warrants required; fair trials required; quartering soldiers in people's homes prohibited
1.3 Write the main reason for each of the Bill of Rights
1.4 Analyze some great American reformers, documents, and symbols in American political culture—Declaration of Independence, "Spirit of 76", Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, Abraham Lincoln, the White House, and the Great Seal of the U.S.
1.5 Compare a posted copy of the Bill of Rights with a posted copy of the Grade Four constitution

Standard 2:

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Fourth grade students will:

2.1 Define and explain the role of a "conflict mediator"
2.2 Explain how the types of law (juvenile, criminal, civil) promote the common good and protect individual rights
2.3 Predict what might happen in a school for one day if no rules or laws were enforced and suggest two ways the school might restore order

Standard 3:

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

Fourth grade students will:

3.1 Explain a current event involving Colorado and an Eastern Hemisphere country example: Colorado trade with Japan
3.2 Calculate the value of $1000 in Mexican pesos and Canadian dollars using the current exchange rate—discuss where they could get more for their money, where less
3.3 Describe a major U.S., Mexico, and Canada treaty—NAFTA, others

Standard 4:

Students understand how citizens exercise the rules, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels – local, state, and national.

Fourth grade students will:

4.1 Collect and explain a display of symbols of citizenship—birth certificate, school ID card, social security card, passport
4.2 Identify official sites where the Colorado flag flies and the reasons citizens show honor at these sites
4.3 Explain the rights expressed in the Declaration of Independence
4.4 Write a paragraph to the Colorado Governor about how to preserve public parks

CIVICS—FIFTH GRADE

Standard 1:

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Fifth grade students will:

1.1 Explain what life is like for people who have no "established" rights, e.g.: immigrants, refugees
1.2 Describe the difference between the "rule of law" and arbitrary decisions of a leader "outside of the law"
1.3 Compare and contrast the Preamble to the Constitution and the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments
1.4 Describe American leaders in American political cultural change, e.g.: Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Harriett Tubman, Booker T. Washington, Franklin Roosevelt, and many others
1.5 Analyze the importance of the Gettsyburg Address and the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments

Standard 2:

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Fifth grade students will:

2.1 Explain the similarities between the state and national branches of government—Executive, Legislative, and Judicial
2.2 Describe how the "balance of power" among the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches operates
2.3 Identify methods of "conflict management"—negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and litigation
2.4 Explain how political parties and campaigns help shape public policies—Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, Green Party, etc.

Standard 3:

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

Fifth grade students will:

3.1 Contrast political formations (nations, countries) with physical formations (land and continents)
3.2 Explain "foreign policy" and explain a selected current U.S. foreign policy
3.3 Give an example of how U.S. foreign policy affects the lives of ordinary U.S. citizens, e.g.: sending American citizens to a war zone; saving American lives by interceding for them in a foreign country

Standard 4:

Students understand how citizens exercise the rules, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels – local, state, and national.

Fifth grade students will:

4.1 Define "naturalization" and describe how to become a citizen of the U.S.
4.2 Analyze how "voluntary public service" and "jury duty" fulfill some of a citizen's responsibility
4.3 Summarize the rights declared in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution
4.4 Explain the importance of voting in local, state, and national elections

CIVICS—SIXTH GRADE

Standard 1:

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Sixth grade students will:

1.1 Explain what life may have been like for American women who had fewer acknowledged rights before 1920 than today
1.2 Differentiate between anarchy, oligarchy, authoritarianism, and totalitarianism
1.3 Describe how the U.S. Constitution built upon the Magna Carta
1.4 Identify American reformers and symbols of political culture—"melting pot", "sweat shop," Jane Addams, Teddy Roosevelt, W. E. B. DuBois, Ida B. Wells, Eugene Debs, Martin Luther King, Jr., Robert Kennedy, and others
1.5 Explain the principles of "majority rule" and "minority rights" in representative government

Standard 2:

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Sixth grade students will:

2.1 Identify the current U.S. President, Colorado Governor, Colorado Senators and members of the House of Representatives
2.2 Explain which powers are primarily state powers (education, law enforcement, and highways)
2.3 Explain how interest groups and leaders influence public policy—AFL-CIO, Martin Luther King, Jr., and others

Standard 3:

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

Sixth grade students will:

3.1 Demonstrate how in America, government expands from the local level to the county, state, national and international levels and contrast to other countries
3.2 Compare what powers in foreign policy are given to the three branches of government by the U.S. Constitution—Executive branch, Legislative branch, and Judicial branch, e.g.: signing a treaty, declaring war
3.3 Define "diplomacy" and explain how the U.S. government has mediated international disputes of many kinds, e.g.: Balkans, Ireland, Mideast, etc.

Standard 4:

Students understand how citizens exercise the rules, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels – local, state, and national.

Sixth grade students will:

4.1 Read and grade themselves on the U.S. citizenship/naturalization test
4.2 Compare the roles of the U.S. military services—Air Force, Army, Marines, and Navy, and discuss how serving in the military serves one's country
4.3 Explain how racial and sexual harassment deprive citizens of their rights
4.4 Give an example of how participating in political life can help solve problems

CIVICS—SEVENTH GRADE

Standard 1:

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Seventh grade students will:

1.1 Produce a bulletin board of articles about Congress, the President, or the Supreme Court showing which government function is being exercised
1.2 Analyze two newspaper stories about the actions of the federal government
1.3 Differentiate between "natural rights" and "social contract"
1.4 Formulate ways in which conflicts are resolved, i.e.: mediation, compromise, and civil disobedience
1.5 Speculate as to how a decision of the local City Council, School Board or County Commission might affect the average citizen—e.g.: zoning open space for a shopping mall; eliminating school athletics

Standard 2:

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Seventh grade students will:

2.1 Know which branch of government to contact to get information, express an opinion, or challenge a law
2.2 Explain why certain powers are primarily national powers—military, income tax, and treaties
2.3 Apply *Miranda vs. Arizona* to the U.S. Constitution and the Colorado Constitution
2.4 Evaluate the role of the mass media influencing public policy—e.g.: gun control and the right to bear arms

Standard 3:

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

Seventh grade students will:

3.1 Construct a hypothetical improvement on the Oslo Accord and the Dayton Accord to negotiate a peace treaty in the Middle East, and then argue the pitfalls of the plan

3.2 Give an example of how citizens can influence foreign policy—e.g.: calling a Senator or Representative to express an opinion

3.3 Describe how U.S, political ideas influence other nations and how other nations' ideas influence the U.S.—e.g.: trade with China and human rights disputes

Standard 4:

Students understand how citizens exercise the rules, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels – local, state, and national.

Seventh grade students will:

4.1 Describe a great American military leader in detail—e.g.: General Eisenhower, General Powell, U.S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, General MacArthur, others

4.2 Hypothesize what would happen to a country if its citizens did not fulfill any citizen responsibilities

4.3 Defend or oppose a school's dress code, using at least five reasons for your position

4.4 Prepare and deliver a two-minute speech for a hypothetical local School Board about your position for or against a school dress code

CIVICS—EIGHTH GRADE

Standard 1:

Students understand the purposes of government, and the basic constitutional principles of the United States republican form of government.

Eighth grade students will:

1.1 Produce a bulletin board of articles about the Colorado legislature, Colorado Governor, or Colorado Supreme Court showing which government function is being exercised
1.2 Analyze and present two newspaper articles about the actions of the state government
1.3 Defend a position on a current issue involving a constitutional protection of individual rights
1.4 Analyze the process for expanding civil rights to more people throughout U.S. history and into the future
1.5 Compare the effects on a country of a low voter turnout v. a higher voter turnout

Standard 2:

Students know the structure and function of local, state, and national government and how citizen involvement shapes public policy.

Eighth grade students will:

2.1 Compare the advantages of a bicameral (two house) state legislature with a unicameral (one house) state legislature
2.2 Identify five decisions which need to be agreed upon by the local, state, and federal governments for the construction of a new interstate highway
2.3 Apply the Colorado Constitution to the *Gideon v. Wainwright* decision
2.4 Explain how immigration and changing demographics might affect civic involvements in the future

Standard 3:

Students know the political relationship of the United States and its citizens to other nations and to world affairs.

Eighth grade students will:

3.1 Discuss and critique U.S. strategies for containing terrorism in the U.S. and around the world
3.2 Study the history of U.S. policy in the Middle East and analyze actions taken over time to protect civil rights
3.3 Describe how an NGO (non-governmental agency) seeks to help with an international problem—e.g.: International Red Cross, others

Standard 4:

Students understand how citizens exercise the rules, rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life at all levels – local, state, and national.

Eighth grade students will:

4.1 Write a paragraph about a good public servant/citizen from the Civil War era—e.g.: a nurse on the battleground, a war veteran from the North or South
4.2 Defend a position in favor of, or in opposition to, establishing a halfway house for rehabilitating felons in their neighborhood
4.3 Write a letter to the hypothetical editor of a local newspaper defending or opposing the right of the First Christian Church to rent your school on Sundays

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